COGNITIVE THEORIES OF LEARNING

Cognitive learning theories hold a unique place in history - they explore the captivating depths of the mind from the perspective of process. According to these theories, one's ability to learn stems from the way one perceives, organizes, stores, and retrieves information. Cognitive approaches can be applied to any discipline. Primary emphases involve problem-solving and the facilitation of storage and retrieval of information for application. The ongoing study and enhancement of these processes can only benefit our ability to learn more efficiently and effectively.

KOHLER - INSIGHT LEARNING

Insight learning was first researched by Wolfgang Kohler (1887–1967). This theory of learning differs from the trial-and-error ideas that were proposed before it. The key aspect of insight learning is that it is achieved through cognitive processes, rather than interactions with the outside world. There is no gradual shaping or trial and error involved; instead, internal organizational processes cause new behavior.

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Sultan the Chimpanzee and Insight Learning

Kohler's most famous study on insight learning involved Sultan the chimpanzee. Sultan was in a cage and was presented with a stick, which he could use to pull a piece of fruit close enough to the cage so that he could pick it up. After Sultan had learned to use the stick to reach the fruit, Kohler moved the fruit out of range of the short stick. He then placed a longer stick within reach of the short stick. Initially, Sultan tried to reach the fruit with the short stick and failed. Eventually, however, Sultan learned to use the short stick to reach the long stick, and then use the long stick to reach the fruit. Sultan was never conditioned to use one stick to reach another; instead, it seemed as if Sultan had an epiphany. The internal process that leads Sultan to use the sticks in this way is a basic example of insight.

TOLMAN- SIGN LEARNING& LATENT LEARNING

Tolman's theorizing has been called purposive behaviourism and is often considered the bridge between behaviorism and cognitive theory. According to Tolman's theory of sign learning, an organism learns by pursuing signs to a goal, i.e., learning is acquired through meaningful behaviour. Tolman emphasized the organized aspect of learning: "The stimuli

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which are allowed in are not connected by just simple one-to-one switches to the outgoing responses. Rather the incoming impulses are usually worked over and elaborated in the central control room into a tentative cognitive-like map of the environment. And it is this tentative map, indicating routes and paths and environmental relationships, which finally determines what responses, if any, the animal will finally make." (Tolman, 1948)

ALBERT BANDURA - SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Bandura (1977) states: "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action."

Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, an environmental influence. The component processes underlying observational learning are: (1) Attention, including modeled events (distinctiveness, affective valence, complexity, prevalence, functional value) and observe characteristics (sensory capacities, arousal level, perceptual set, past reinforcement), (2) Retention, including symbolic coding, cognitive organization, symbolic rehearsal, motor rehearsal), (3) Motor Reproduction, including physical capabilities, self-observation of reproduction, accuracy of feedback, and (4) Motivation, including external, vicarious and self-reinforcement. Because it encompasses attention, memory and motivation, social learning theory spans both cognitive and behavioral frameworks.

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